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THE TEXAN REVOLUTIONARY ARMY.¹

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1. *The Consultation and the Military Plan.*

It will be remembered that when the war of the Texas Revolution began a call had been issued for the election of delegates to a convention or consultation at San Felipe on October 15. At the appointed time, however, a volunteer army was already on the march to Bexar, and many of the delegates were with it, so that the meeting was postponed by agreement until November 1. In the meantime there had been formed at San Felipe by the advice of Stephen F. Austin a sort of central executive committee, composed of representatives of the local committees of safety and correspondence. This committee, self-styled the "permanent council," assumed until October 31 general direction of the work of organizing the defense against the Indians and of reinforcing and supplying the volunteers. By November 3 a quorum of the delegates had arrived in San Felipe, and the consultation began its sessions. Its most important work was the adoption of a plan for a provisional government and for the formation of a regular army. The government was to consist of a governor, a lieutenant governor, and a general council, composed of one member from each municipality

¹In the preparation of this paper use has been made chiefly of the *Journals of the Consultation*; of the *Journal of the Proceedings of the General Council of the Republic of Texas*, etc., which will be referred to

of Texas. The military plan contemplated two things—the creation of a regular army and the organization of the militia.

The army was to consist of 1120 men, rank and file, part of them regulars, enlisted for two years, and part of them volunteers, enlisted for, and during the continuance of, the war—"permanent volunteers," they were called. To this was added a corps of 150 rangers, commanded by a major, and subject to the commander-in-chief when in the field. The soldiers were to be governed, so far as local conditions and circumstances would permit, by the regulations and discipline of the regular army of the United States. And the force might be decreased or augmented at the discretion of the governor and council. The commander-in-chief, appointed by the consultation and commissioned by the governor, and "subject to the orders of the governor and council," had the rank of major general and was to be "commander-in-chief of all the forces called into public service during the war." He was allowed to choose his own staff of one adjutant general, one inspector general, one quartermaster general, a surgeon general, and four aids-de-camp.

For militia duty all able-bodied men between the ages of sixteen and fifty were declared qualified, and they were ordered to embody themselves, on or immediately after the third Monday in December, in companies of fifty-six men, and elect officers—a captain and a first and second lieutenant. The municipality was to be the basis of organization, and in case there should be as many as three companies in a single municipality, the officers were to elect a major to command the entire force; if there were four companies, they were entitled to a lieutenant colonel; if five, to a colonel, and if more than five, to a brigadier general. Five companies formed a regiment of militia.¹

General Sam Houston had already been elected commander-in-as, *Proceedings of the General Council; of the Ordinances and Decrees of the Consultation, Provisional Government of Texas, and the Convention*, etc., which will be referred to as, *Ordinances and Decrees*; and of the Archives of Texas, section D. Since my notes were made these documents have been transferred to the State Library and catalogued, but the file numbers have been preserved, and are therefore retained in the references. Considerable use has also been made of the Austin Papers, at the University of Texas.

¹*Journals of the Consultation*, 48-49.

chief (November 12)¹ and on the 14th the consultation adjourned, to be succeeded by the provisional government that it had created.

2. *The Organization of the Army.*

The Militia.—In his first message to the council, on November 16, Governor Smith, among other recommendations, urged haste in the organization of the militia. The council thereupon instructed the military committee to consider the object of the consultation in ordering an election of militia officers in December. The ideas of the committee were embodied in an ordinance that was passed November 25. It provided that the council should appoint in each municipality three commissioners to divide the district into militia precincts, which were to conform as nearly as possible with those already existing, and to choose election judges for each precinct. Officers were to be elected and companies formed as required by the plan of the consultation. Muster days were fixed for company, battalion, regimental, and brigade drill on the first Saturday in April, May, September, and October, respectively. Commissioners for sixteen municipalities were elected November 26, those for Matagorda were appointed the next day, and others for San Patricio and Sabine later. The governor was commander-in-chief of the militia, and was allowed a staff of four aids with the rank of colonel.² To what extent the organization of the militia was effected is uncertain. Probably very little was done, for about the time that the elections were to take place news spread that the volunteers had begun the storming of Bexar and needed reinforcements. Many prepared to hasten to their assistance, some of the commissioners among them, and thus the organization was delayed.³

¹*Journals of the Consultation*, 36.

²*Proceedings of the General Council*, 14, 24, 43, 48-9, 56-8, 70, 148, 166; *Ordinances and Decrees*, 28-30.

³Thus Eli Mercer, writing to Governor Smith, December 16, said: "I received your appointment authorizing me to assist in organizing the militia of Austin. I have called a meeting of the board to attend to this, but feel it my duty to join the army, which I shall do next Tuesday. I recommend Mr. Menefee for my place in organizing the militia." Archives of Texas, D. file 13, No. 1261.

The Regular Army.—The military committee on November 21 presented a detailed report on the organization of the regular army. This force, which the consultation had limited to 1120 men, they proposed to divide into two regiments—one of artillery and one of infantry—of 560 men each. Each regiment was divided into two battalions and each battalion into five companies of fifty-six men. The field officers of the infantry were to be a colonel, a lieutenant colonel, and a major; those of the artillery, a colonel, two lieutenants colonel, and two majors. Artillery companies, likewise, were to have three lieutenants instead of two. These additional officers were considered necessary on account of the varied and important work that would be required of the artillery.¹ The council with some amendments adopted this report in the form of an ordinance on the 24th. Officers and privates were to be subject to the same discipline and to receive the same pay as in the regular army of the United States, and each private and non-commissioned officer was promised a bounty of 640 acres of land. Later, as an incentive to enlistment in the regular army, rather than with the volunteers, an additional bounty of 160 acres of land and \$24 in money was offered the regulars; one-half of the money was to be paid when the recruit reported at headquarters, and the balance on the first quarterly pay-day thereafter.²

On the same day that this ordinance was passed Governor Smith sent to the council a message, urging it to make "the necessary enactments calculated to authorize the commander-in-chief to issue his proclamation, in order that volunteers and other troops . . . may know to whom to report." Whatever the act may have been which the governor considered necessary, the council was in no hurry about passing it. On the 28th company officers were elected for the regiment of infantry, and on December 1 it was agreed to elect the artillery officers the following Monday. Before this was done, however, the governor transmitted to the council a letter from General Houston, complaining of that body's delay in helping him

¹Their appointment appears to have caused some dissatisfaction, and in his message of January 14 Lieutenant Governor Robinson, then acting governor, advised their abolition. Nothing was done with his recommendation.—*Proceedings of the General Council*, 323.

²*Proceedings of the General Council*, 41, 47, 50, 150; *Ordinances and Decrees*, 21-22, 87.

organize the regular forces. The military committee replied that, considering "the press of business and the distracted state of affairs," they had done as much as they could, and been as expeditious as possible, a good deal of their time being necessarily consumed in trying to provide for the volunteer army. They were of the opinion, moreover, that it would not be good policy, anyway, to appoint all of the officers of the regular army at that time. If the war should be prolonged, Texas would be compelled, they said, to depend largely upon aid from abroad, and they thought that men of superior qualifications would hardly be attracted from the United States if every door to promotion were closed.¹ In conclusion, they urged that the governor be requested to issue a proclamation fixing the headquarters of the army at Gonzales or some other point on the frontier.²

On December 7 and 8 the field officers for both infantry and artillery were elected,³ but in accordance with the above report,

¹This was in complete agreement with the policy of the consultation. In his inaugural address the chairman of that body had said, "Some of our brethren of the United States of the North . . . have generously come to our aid, many more ere long will be with us. . . . The path to promotion must be open, they must know that deeds of chivalry and heroism will meet their rewards" (*Journals of the consultation*, 8). But the greatest influence was probably exerted on the committee by a letter from J. W. Fannin, Jr., which they had considered on December 4. Fannin was sure that many West Point graduates would come to Texas, if commands were reserved for them.—Fannin to Smith, November 31 [*sic*], 1835, in archives of Texas, D, file 6, No. 555. Part of the letter is printed in the *QUARTERLY*, VII 324-25.)

²*Proceedings of the General Council*, 52, 71, 107, 116-17. For Houston's letter see Yoakum, *History of Texas*, II 447. General Houston declared that the chairman of the military committee (Wyatt Hanks) through personal dislike for him was throwing obstacles in the way of the organization of the army. And the above report, he said, originally contained such indecorous remarks about him that the council had thought it necessary to expunge them.—*Houston to Smith*, December 17, 1835, in Yoakum, II 453. The indecorous matter seems to have been to the effect that the importance of supplying the volunteer army could not be neglected by proceeding immediately, simply "to gratify the wishes of General Sam Houston," to the election of officers for the regular army. See W. Roy Smith's "The Quarrel between Governor Smith and the General Council," etc., in the *QUARTERLY*, V 310.

³Of the artillery J. W. Fannin, Jr., was elected colonel, James C. Neill

company officers for only one battalion of artillery were chosen. Before hearing of this action General Houston wrote again to the governor, insisting that a complete corps of officers must be elected at once, if any success were to be expected in enlisting the regular army. Upon receipt of this letter the council proceeded to the election of company officers for the remaining battalion of artillery (December 11). The commander-in-chief was then provided with a list of all his officers and a copy of all proceedings of the council that related to the army. The council, however, was not yet through with the general. Another letter to Governor Smith on December 17 called attention to the fact that no appropriation had been made to cover the expenses of the recruiting service. A few officers had been ordered on this service, he said, but he had done it solely on his own responsibility. This obstacle was removed by the council on the 21st, when an ordinance was passed, appropriating \$40,000 for recruiting purposes. Another ordinance (December 26), empowering all commissioned officers to administer the oath of enlistment completed the enactments for the organization of the regular army.¹

In the meantime, the council had early taken up the organization of the corps of rangers, which was to form a sort of adjunct to the regular army. The consultation had authorized the enlistment of three companies, aggregating 150 men, but the ordinance proposed by the military committee, November 21, raised the number to 168, in order that the companies might conform in size to those of the regular army. The rangers' term of service was fixed at one year and their pay at \$1.25 a day. They were to furnish their own rations, horses and equipment, and were required to be "always ready armed and supplied with one hundred rounds of powder and

and David B. Macomb lieutenants colonel, and W. B. Travis and "T. F. L. Barrett" (this undoubtedly should be T. F. L. Parrott) majors. Of the infantry Philip A. Sublett was elected colonel, Henry Millard lieutenant colonel, and William Oldham major. Travis declined his appointment in the artillery, on the ground that he believed he could be more useful in some other branch of the army, and F. W. Johnson was elected in his place. Sublett did not accept the colonelcy of infantry, and Edward Burlison fell heir to that place.

¹*Proceedings of the General Council*, 121, 124, 141, 148, 151, 181, 185, 191, 210; *Ordinances and Decrees*, 96, 99. For Houston's letters see Yokum, II 449, 453.

ball." R. M. Williamson was elected major and commandant of the rangers, subject to the orders of the commander-in-chief.¹

Auxiliary Forces.—On December 4 the council referred to the military committee a letter from J. W. Fannin on the subject of the regular army. He was emphatically of the opinion that its size ought to be doubled. "If an army be at all requisite," he said, "it sh'd be *large enough to answer the [purpose] of its creation*. . . . The case appears to me so plain that I can not doubt but you will see it in the same light. With this conviction, I will proceed to the main subject—By virtue of your delegated powers & exigency of the case increase the 'Regular Army' to another Brigade of like numbers with the one already ordered."² It was no doubt due to the influence of this letter that the military committee at the evening session of December 4 introduced an ordinance "to organize and establish an auxiliary volunteer corps to the army of Texas." By a suspension of the rules the act was passed the next day. Permanent volunteers, or those enlisted for the duration of the war, were to receive the same pay, rations, and clothing as were allowed by the United States in the war of 1812, and, in addition, at the expiration of service, or when honorably discharged, a bounty of 640 acres of land.³ Those who enlisted for only three months were entitled to 320 acres of land, but at the discretion of the governor and the commander-in-chief others could be accepted for even a shorter period, such as they thought consistent with the good of the service. These last, however, were to receive no bounty. The ordinance does not fix the number of this corps, but the day after its passage a resolution was adopted authorizing the commander-in-chief "to accept the services of at

¹*Proceedings of the General Council*, 39, 49, 72, 87-8; *Ordinances and Decrees*, 20.

²Fannin to Smith, November 31 [sic], 1835, archives of Texas, D, file 6, No. 555.

³It will be remembered that the regular army was composed of regulars and of volunteers enlisted for the duration of the war. A supplemental ordinance of December 14 increased the bounty of these to 800 acres of land and \$24 in money. So far as can be gathered from the records, the only differences between these "permanent volunteers" of the regular army and the volunteers of the auxiliary corps seem to have been that the former were entitled to this larger bounty and the latter were allowed to choose their own company officers.

least five thousand auxiliary volunteers, in addition to the local volunteers.”¹

Just as the auxiliary corps was in a great measure due to the influence of Fannin, so the creation of a cavalry force seems to have received its first impulse from Travis. On December 3 he wrote to Governor Smith, saying that a member of the council had asked him for his views on the organization of the army. He unhesitatingly approved the recommendations of Fannin on the subject of the regular army, he said, and, therefore, confined himself to a consideration of the volunteers. Among these he thought that provision should by all means be made for a battalion of cavalry, commanded by a lieutenant colonel, “subject alone to the orders of the commander-in-chief for the time being.” They ought to be armed with broadswords, pistols, and double-barrelled shotguns or yagers, and should be enlisted for twelve months—unless the war terminated sooner,—“subject to *regular discipline* & the rules & articles of war,” for, he concluded, “a mob can do wonders in a sudden burst of patriotism or passion, but can not be depended on as soldiers for a campaign.”² This letter was passed to the military committee on the 4th, and on the 16th Mr. Hanks, the chairman, brought in a bill embodying Travis’s recommendation. General Austin and General Houston both concurred, he said, in the belief that cavalry was necessary. The strength of the force was fixed at 384 men, rank and file, divided into six companies, and Travis’s suggestion as to arms was so modified that, while all of them had broadswords and pistols, one-half of them had in addition double-barrelled shotguns and the other half yagers. They were to receive the same pay as cavalry in the service of the United States and a bounty of 640 acres of land. It is somewhat interesting to note that this was the only force for which the council prescribed, or, indeed, even mentioned a uniform. It was to be “a suit of cadet grey cloth coats, [with] yellow bullet buttons, and pantaloons for winter, and two suits of gray cottonade roundabouts and pantaloons for summer, and fur caps, black cloth stocks and cowhide boots.” Travis, who had declined a previous appoint-

¹*Proceedings of the General Council*, 105, 106, 107, 118; *Ordinances and Decrees*, 47-50, 85.

²Travis to Smith, December 3, 1835, archives of Texas, D, file 18, No. 1757.

ment in the artillery, was elected lieutenant colonel and commandant.¹

An "Army of Reserve for the protection of the Liberties of Texas" was the last of the auxiliary forces authorized by the council. It was to number 1145 men, officers included,—three battalions of infantry, one of riflemen, one of cavalry and one of field artillery—and was to receive the same pay and bounty as the other auxiliaries. Judge T. J. Chambers was responsible for this act. The first of January, he offered to recruit a force in the United States and have it ready for service, if possible, by May 15, 1836. He agreed to loan \$10,000 of the funds necessary for the purpose, and to raise the balance on the credit of the government without harassing the council. Naturally the council accepted the proposal, and pledged the public faith to repay his loan and any other obligation incurred by the undertaking. Chambers, with the rank of general, was to command the men enlisted. This ordinance was passed January 7 and sent to the governor for approval, but was never returned by him to the council. Chambers, therefore, was never commissioned, and, strictly speaking, had no authority to carry out his plan. Nevertheless, he was not deterred, as we shall see, from going to the United States and sending to Texas between May and December of 1836 nearly 2000 men and quantities of war materials, in which he spent some \$23,000 of personal funds and \$9,035 in Texas bonds.²

3. *Recruiting the Army.*

The Regular Army. — The effort to enlist the regular army was a heart-breaking failure. Accurate figures can not be obtained, but the assertion may be ventured that at no time before the battle of San Jacinto did the regulars much exceed one hundred men. Houston issued

¹*Proceedings of the General Council*, 169-70, 188; *Ordinances and Decrees*, 92. On January 7, 1836, the council passed "an ordinance and decree to amend an ordinance and decree for augmenting the regular army of Texas, and for raising a cavalry corps," but in the confusion of that time it escaped publication, and no clue to its contents can be obtained.—See *Ibid.*, 262, 275-76.

²*Proceedings of the General Council*, 275; *Ordinances and Decrees*, 123-25.

his first proclamation inviting recruits December 12.¹ It is a remarkably strong document, even for Houston's pen, but it was all but fruitless. By January 17 there were thirty-five regulars at Refugio, and some others, apparently, elsewhere, for Houston urges Governor Smith to "cause all the regulars now enlisted to be formed into companies, and marched to headquarters."² By January 28 Travis had enlisted twenty-six more and marched to the relief of Bexar. And on February 12 George W. Poe wrote that there were many at Columbia who would enlist if the officers were only prepared to "support them and clothe them." "Lieutenant Chaffin," he said, "has enlisted about 30 men who have no place to live at and he has no supply of arms, clothing &c for them."³ But the fact remains that on March 10, when the Alamo had been four days fallen, and Sesma was beginning his march on San Felipe, Harrisburg, and Anahuac, and when Urrea was drawing near Fannin at Goliad after the massacre of Johnson and Grant's division at San Patricio, a special committee, appointed by the convention then in session at Washington, had to report that "Of the regular army, there appears to be sixty privates," and, though they did not know it, thirty of these were dead with Travis in the ruins of the Alamo. The chairman, J. W. Bunton, acknowledged that his information was incomplete, and there may have been a few more, in fact, he had heard unofficially of a company of forty regulars under Captain Teal, but the number all told was pitifully small.⁴

The Auxiliary Corps.—Enlistments for the auxiliary corps were more numerous. Companies from Tennessee and New Orleans and Mobile had arrived early in the campaign of 1835, and, as time passed, volunteers came in constantly increasing numbers from the United States—chiefly from Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Ohio (Cincinnati). Most of these later arrivals and some of the earlier ones joined the auxiliary corps,

¹Yoakum, II 450-52.

²Houston to Smith, January 17, 1836, in Yoakum, II 458-59.

³Travis to Smith, January 28, 1836, archives of Texas, D, file 18, No. 1759; Poe to Smith, February 12, 1836, archives of Texas, D, file 15, No. 1412.

⁴*Proceedings of the Convention at Washington*, 57-58, in Gammel's *Laws of Texas*, I 877-78.

though in general they hesitated to volunteer for a definite period, and were with difficulty enlisted for a term of only three months.¹ After the capture of San Antonio, an effort was made to bring the volunteers there under the orders of the commander-in-chief,² but most of the Texans dispersed to their homes, and the others, together with some companies from the United States at first refused to submit to the command of an officer of the regular army. Six captains—Llewellyn, Lawrence, Pearson, Baugh, Burk, and Cooke—declared themselves of this mind, December 25, and claimed that their men, having volunteered with the understanding that they would be independent of the laws of the regular army, could not be induced to serve under any other condition.³ They must have thought better of it very soon, however, for a month later three of these captains, Burke, Cooke, and Lawrence were refusing to follow F. W. Johnson in the Matamoras expedition without the consent of General Houston, and one of the others, John J. Baugh, was killed while serving under Colonel Travis in the Alamo.

Indifference of the Texans.—The citizens of Texas often manifested a surprising amount of indifference toward the war—and

¹Houston, writing to Governor Smith, December 30, 1835, enclosed muster rolls for the companies of Captains Wyatt and King, and said, "I have had much difficulty in getting them to volunteer for any definite period. But the ordinance left a discretion with me to accept their services for such time as I 'might think the good of the service required.' I did think it necessary to specify some certain time, and that time, I conceived, ought not to be less than three months; if so it would be burdensome to the country without corresponding benefit. I think they will eventually all volunteer for during the war."—Yoakum, II 456.

²Governor Smith, in a message to the council, dated December 23, said, "The documents relating to the creation of officers in the camp [*i. e.*, at Bexar], requiring commissions, &c. &c, I have passed over to the commander-in-chief, with a request that he proceed to order the proper officers to that point to take command, and reduce the previous disorganization to system."—*Proceedings of the General Council*, 196.

³Archives of Texas, D, file 10, No. 945. F. W. Johnson for personal motives probably brought about this declaration. He transmitted the protest of the captains to the council with this postscript: "It is utterly impossible to induce the army now here to become auxiliaries to the regular army, or to subject them to the comr-in-chief," though he adds, "they have willingly submitted to a system of due subordination and discipline as citizen soldiers."

this attitude was much more general than is ordinarily suspected. They did, as we shall see below, form the majority of the force that by good luck captured Bexar in December, but their lack of discipline—the simple expression of the frontiersman's individuality—was the despair of such officers as Austin, Travis, and Fanin. With the termination of the campaign they did not enlist either as regulars or auxiliaries, and did not again take the field in any numbers until immediately preceding the battle of San Jacinto. On December 17 Silas M. Parker wrote the president of the general council that he had with the greatest exertion been able to get together but thirty rangers, and could with difficulty get provisions for them. "I cannot," he said, "engage any beef or pork for them, tho there is plenty in the country. Such is the indifference of the people as to the cause of Texas." He had to go to the men who had beeves to spare and value the beeves and kill them himself. Travis, in a letter to Governor Smith, January 28, complained of the same indifference, and gives some pertinent reasons for it. He said: "I have done everything in my power to get ready to march to the relief of Bexar, but owing to the difficulty of getting horses & provisions, & owing to desertions &c, I shall march today with only about thirty men, all regulars except four. . . . Our affairs are gloomy indeed—The people are cold and indifferent—They are worn down & exhausted with the war, & in consequence of dissensions between contending & rival chieftains they have lost all confidence in their own gov't and officers. You have no idea of the exhausted state of the country—Volunteers can no longer be had or relied on—A speedy organization, classification, & draft of the militia is all that can save us now. A regular army is necessary—but money, & *money* only can raise & equip a regular army— . . . The patriotism of a few has done much; but that is becoming worn down—I have strained every nerve—I have used my personal credit & have neither slept day nor night since I received orders to march—and with all this exertion I have barely been able to get horses and equipments for the few men I have." Again he writes from Bexar, when the enemy were already advancing against it, that he hopes the people of Texas will at last open their eyes to the danger and unite in a common cause. But he bitterly adds, "I fear that it is useless to waste arguments upon them—*The thunder of the enemy's can-*

non and . . . The cries of their famished children and the smoke of their burning dwellings will only arouse them—I regret that the gov't has so long neglected a draft of the militia which is the only measure that will ever again bring the citizens of Texas to the Frontier.” Almost at the same time Fannin was writing to Lieutenant Governor Robinson, “But when I tell you that among the rise of 400 men at and near this post, I doubt if twenty-five citizens of Texas can be mustered in the ranks—nay, I am informed that there is not half that number—Does not this fact bespeak an indifference and criminal apathy truly alarming? We count upon the service of our volunteer friends to aid in the defense and protection of our soil. Do the citizens of Texas reflect for a moment that these men, many of whom have not received the first *cent's wages*, and are nearly naked and many of them barefooted, or what is tantamount to it? Could they hear the just complaints and taunting remarks in regard to the *absence* of the old settlers and owners of the soil, and total neglect in the officers of the Government—not providing them with even the necessaries of life—this, our mainstay would not be so confidently relied on!” Finally, on April 8, when Santa Anna was at San Felipe, entering the heart of the most populous settlements, A. Roberts wrote to President Burnet, “I was astonished to find upon making a call upon the men who have stopped here [at Spring Creek] that in place of obeying promptly the general's call, some of them began to prepare for going further who had previously decided on remaining here for some time . . . while others manifest a total indifference on the subject. . . . It is thought that there is at this time on this side of the Brazos in a moving position at least a thousand men liable to do militia duty.”¹

The special committee appointed by the convention to consider the state of the army could only report, therefore, on March 10,

¹Parker to Robinson, December 17, 1835, archives of Texas, D, file 14, No. 1408; Travis to Smith, January 28, 1836, D, file 18, No. 1759 (A part of this letter may be found in Brown's *A History of Texas*, I 532); same to same, February 12, 1836, D, file 18, No. 1761; Fannin to Robinson, February 10, 1836; Roberts to Burnet, April 8, 1836, D, file 15, No. 1470. Of the same tenor are the letters of John Sowers Brooks, in the *QUARTERLY*, IX 178, 181, 191, 194-95. On March 9 he wrote to a friend in New York, “And with this handful of 6 or 700 Volunteers we are left by the generous Texians to roll back the tide of invasion from their soil.”

that "Of the volunteer army, there are 390 at Goliad, commanded by Colonels Fannin and Ward and Major Mitchell; and 130 at Bexar under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Travis."¹ There was, besides, at this time a force concentrating at Gonzales, but most of it, no doubt, was composed of citizen soldiers, not regularly enlisted.²

The Army of Reserve.—General Chambers and his "Army of the Reserve" warrant a passing notice. He left Texas February 22 for Natchez, Mississippi. Shortly after his arrival there news of the fall of the Alamo and the Goliad massacre so lowered the credit of Texas that he could raise no funds, either on his personal pledge or on that of the State, and very few volunteers. He reached Tennessee coincidently with reports of the battle of San Jacinto, and found his credit improved. He sold some land, and in the next six months sent many companies to Texas from Tennessee, Kentucky, and Ohio. By December (1836) he had thrown into Texas 1915 men, all well equipped, and had shipped a number of cannon and a considerable amount of ammunition and other supplies. In doing this he expended of his own money \$23,621.30, and in bonds which he issued on the government of Texas \$9,035. Besides these amounts a great deal had been contributed by sympathetic friends for the support of the men. He had been hampered a good deal in his operations, he said, by President Burnet's proclamation that Texas had no agents in the United States, except Thomas Toby & Brother. Some time in 1837 he returned to Texas, and made a detailed report to congress on June 3. He claimed that he had faithfully fulfilled his contract, and that by the terms of his commission from the council he was a major general, the second one created—Houston being the first—and now that Houston was president he was entitled to the command of the Texan army. Congress accepted his report, voted him a resolution of gratitude for his services, instructed the auditor to honor his

¹*Proceedings of the Convention at Washington*, 57, in Gammel's *Laws of Texas*, I 877.

²On March 8, the number at Gonzales was about 170; when General Houston took command on the 11th there were 374.—Moseley Baker to committee of San Felipe, March 8, 1836 (circular in the Austin Papers); and Houston to Collinsworth, March 15, 1836, in Yoakum, II 476.

accounts, and requested the president to make a satisfactory settlement with him in regard to his commission.¹

4. *Supplying the Army.*

Though the regular army, so far as its relation to the general council was concerned, remained a good deal of an abstraction, steps were not neglected to secure supplies for its use when needed. On November 27 an ordinance ordered the purchase of munitions, provisions, scientific and surgical instruments, books, and stationery. Among the small arms enumerated were 300 yagers, 600 muskets, 200 pairs of cavalry pistols, 1000 butcher knives, and 1000 tomahawks; among the provisions desired were 350 barrels of flour, 20,000 pounds of bacon, 15,000 pounds each of coffee and brown sugar, 5000 pounds of soap, and 3000 pounds of Kentucky chewing tobacco; the books included 100 copies of Scott's "Infantry Drill," 26 copies of Crop's "Discipline and Regulations," and 36 copies of McComb's "School of the Soldier."² A resolution of December 6 permitted the commander-in-chief to send two agents along with the commissioners to the United States to purchase these supplies, but whether he availed himself of the privilege does not appear. Doubtless many of the supplies were never bought, but the commissioners, Messrs. Austin, Archer, and William H. Wharton, appointed William Bryan, of New Orleans, general agent for Texas, and he from time to time shipped the stores that were most urgently needed.

The council decided, December 8, that the original order for

¹Chambers's report, without the documents and vouchers by which he fortified it, is printed in the *Telegraph and Texas Register*, July 15, 1837. Burnet strongly insinuated that Chambers left Texas to avoid participating in the war, and thought it a piece of sentimentality in Congress to recognize in any degree his claims upon the government. His argument, briefly, was that Chambers had gotten his appointment from the Council while Texas was still fighting for the Constitution of 1824. He was, therefore, a Mexican officer. The Convention declared Texas independent in March, and the Constitution provided that all civil appointments of the provisional government should remain temporarily in force, but made no such provision for the military. Hence Chambers had no appointment at all.—*Telegraph and Texas Register*, August 26, 1837.

²*Proceedings of the General Council*, 39, 40; *Ordinances and Decrees*, 34-36, 56.

350 barrels of flour was insufficient, and increased the number to 700, while at the same time it requested the governor to have the commissioners to the United States employ one or more bakers for the army. On December 18 it created the office of commissary general and appointed to the place Thos. F. McKinney, probably the largest merchant in Texas. Mr. McKinney declined the office, but never spared either trouble or expense in his private capacity to procure all necessary supplies for the soldiers. Finally, thinking, perhaps, that private enterprise might be able to supply some necessities which the government could not, the council elected a sutler. He was governed by the regulations for the same office in the United States army, and had authority to appoint sub-sutlers whenever the commander-in-chief requested them.¹

5. *Dependence Upon the United States.*

Of the Consultation.—From the very first day of its session the consultation looked toward the United States for aid, both in men and money. Indeed, the “permanent council” before it had already issued an address to “Citizens of the United States of the North,” begging for help and promising to volunteers ample rewards in land and money.² Mr. Edward Hall, on November 3, brought the news that a committee of Texas sympathizers in New Orleans had raised \$7500 and equipped and started to Texas two companies of volunteers. And Dr. Archer, in his inaugural address to the consultation, expressed the opinion that many others from the United States would soon arrive. By his advice the consultation among its first measures made provision for rewarding such as came with grants of land, and placing them “on an equal footing with the most favored citizens.” Mr. Hall was then appointed agent for Texas to solicit volunteers and purchase munitions of war in the United States, with instructions to draw on the New Orleans committee for the amount of his purchases. And on the 12th the consultation elected three commissioners—Austin, Archer, and W. H. Wharton—to go to the United States and, especially, negotiate a loan,

¹*Proceedings of the General Council*, 130, 189, 254, 286; *Ordinances and Decrees*, 74, 94, 132.

²The QUARTERLY, VII 271-73, note.

but incidentally to make arrangements for fitting out a navy, procure supplies for the army, and receive donations.¹

Of the General Council.—The general council continued to look in the same direction. In his first message Governor Smith suggested the formation of a corps of “civil and topographical engineers,” for what was considered the extremely important work of fortifying the seaports and frontier towns. The special committee that considered this recommendation reported their entire accord with His Excellency, but upon investigation were forced to confess, they said, “that our country at this moment, whatever it may possess of enterprise and skill, talent and industry in other branches of science adapted to the more immediate necessities of a pioneer population, is nevertheless almost entirely destitute of that species of knowledge essential to the construction of fortifications and works of defense. . . . Your committee, therefore, . . . recommend that we direct our search to the United States, and procure from thence as many gentlemen of acknowledged scientific attainments in this arm of defense as may be necessary, and that this important duty be confided to our three agents, Messrs. Austin, Archer, and Wharton, who are soon to proceed on their mission.” The organization of this force went no further, but the council took pains to have published in the United States the ordinances creating the auxiliary corps and fixing the bounty of volunteers, and, as we have seen, one reason why it delayed the election of officers for the regular army was the fear that men of high qualifications would be deterred from coming to Texas unless they could obtain commissions.² That this dependence upon the United States was well placed has been abundantly shown. Loans and donations of money and provisions were large, and volunteers came in ever increasing numbers, as the revolution progressed.

6. *Overtures to the Mexican Liberals.*

By the Consultation.—During the first day’s session of the consultation a committee of twelve was appointed to frame “a declaration, setting forth to the world the causes why we have taken up

¹*Journals of the Consultation*, 7, 9, 24, 29, 31, 37; Instructions to the Commissioners, Austin Papers, N 2.

²*Proceedings of the General Council*, 13, 29-30, 110-11, 117, 124.

arms, and the objects for which we fight." The subject evoked much and animated discussion, and at least four provisional declarations were submitted, but all were harmonized by the committee, whose report was adopted, November 7. A fair impression of this "declaration of November 7th" can best be conveyed by quoting those sections defining the attitude of Texas toward Mexico. "The good people of Texas," so runs the preamble, "availing themselves of their natural rights, solemnly declare,

1st. That they have taken up arms in defence of their rights and liberties, . . . and in defence of the republican principles of the federal constitution of Mexico of eighteen and twenty-four.

"2d. That Texas is no longer morally or civilly bound by the compact of union; yet, stimulated by the generosity and sympathy common to a free people, they offer their support and assistance to such of the members of the Mexican confederacy as will take up arms against military despotism.

"3d. That they do not acknowledge that the present authorities of the nominal Mexican republic have the right to govern within the limits of Texas.

"4th. That they will not cease to carry on war against the said authorities, whilst their troops are within the limits of Texas.

"5th. That they hold it to be their right during the disorganization of the federal system, and the reign of despotism, to withdraw from the union, to establish an independent government, or to adopt such measures as they deem best calculated to protect their rights and liberties, but that they will continue faithful to the Mexican government so long as that nation is governed by the constitution and laws that were formed for the government of the political association."¹

There were not wanting astute Mexicans in Texas who claimed that the declaration was insincere, and Austin thought it ambiguous.²

¹*Journals of the Consultation*, 12, 21-22. The four drafts of the declaration referred to may be found in the archives of Texas: A, file 2, No. 282; A, file 3, No. 441½; and in Volume 3 of Records, in Vault No. 1, pp. 16-17, and 24. The last two are copies. An interesting account of the discussion of the declaration in the consultation is given in a letter from Gail Borden, Jr., to Austin, November 5, 1835, in the Austin Papers.

²See Antonio Padillo to General Council (November 25, 1835), concerning the iconoclastic views of Father Alpuche, in archives of Texas,

But the consultation was much encouraged a few days later by the news that General Mexia had organized a small force in New Orleans and was preparing to make a descent upon Tampico in the interest of federalism, while a committee reported on the 12th that the rumors of unsettled conditions in Mexico "gives hopes of a co-operation of our Mexican brethren in the glorious cause of liberty and the constitution, in which Texas has set the noble example." This feeling can only have been increased by the arrival of Governor Viesca and Col. José María Gonzales, the latter bringing with him about twenty Mexican soldiers. He had formerly served in the Mexican army and had at one time commanded several companies of cavalry that were then defending Bexar. Austin and Fannin believed that he could induce these to desert in a body.¹

By the General Council.—Gonzales came before the general council, November 30, and, after having explained to him the declaration of the 7th, offered his services and was accepted (December 3) as "a volunteer to defend the republican principles of the constitution of 1824, and the rights of Texas." He was ordered to retain command of the Mexicans under his charge and report himself to General Burleson at Bexar. An advance of \$500 was made him to defray necessary expenses of himself and men. He cannot have arrived at Bexar in time to have caused much disaffection among its defenders, but the day after its fall we do find him issuing a proclamation to his old comrades in arms, urging them to help the Texans support the standard of federation.²

In the meantime, General Mexia, returning from his disastrous

D, file 14, No. 1406; and Austin to Provisional Government (copy), December 2, 1835, in Volume 3 of Records, pp. 157-59.

¹*Journals of the Consultation*, 41-42. For the hopes that Austin and Fannin entertained of the ability of Gonzales to cause the disaffection of the garrison at Bexar, see Austin to Dimit and Austin to the provisional government, November 18, 1835 (in Austin's Order Book, pp. 65, 69, Austin Papers, K 64) and Fannin to Houston, same date, archives of Texas, D, file 6, No. 557. Also Johnson to Williamson, November 18, 1835, archives of Texas, D, file 10, No. 926.

²*Proceedings of the General Council*, 79, 87; Committee to Gonzales, December 3, 1835, archives of Texas, D, file 15, No. 1492. Filisola, in *Memorias para la Historia de la Guerra de Tejas*, II 171-173, prints Gonzales's proclamation.

expedition to Tampico, reached the mouth of the Brazos, December 3, and asked the government to inform him how he could best use the men under his command to the advantage of the federal cause. Almost simultaneously came Capt. Julian Miracle from Mier, saying that the Liberals of Tamaulipas and Nuevo León were ready to join the Texans, if they were fighting to sustain the federal system and not for independence. Canales, a lawyer of Mier, was already at Palo Blanco, he said, within two days' march of San Patricio, with two hundred men; and the Mexican garrison at Lipantitlán was ready to join Canales or Gonzales at any time. In reply to General Mexia the council first instructed William Pettus and Thos. F. McKinney to help him in any way necessary to enable him to proceed to the interior and carry the war into the enemy's country; but on the 10th it asked him to go to Bexar and reinforce the besieging army there. For the information of the Liberals whom Captain Miracle represented a committee was appointed to prepare an address to the Mexican people. Their report was adopted on the 11th, and Miracle, with five hundred copies printed in Spanish, was returned post haste to his friends. In substance it was about the same as the declaration of November 7: Texas was defending herself and the constitution, she had no intention of declaring independence, and offered her assistance to the opponents of Centralism everywhere.¹

Lack of Confidence in the Liberals.—But the government was not agreed on a policy toward the Mexicans. Governor Smith said that he had no faith in them. He vetoed on the 9th an ordinance for the relief of Mexia, and wrote the same day to Burleson, saying that the council had fitted out Gonzales without his knowledge or consent. "You will keep a strict eye on him," he admonished, "and if he should seem not to act in good faith I now order you to arrest him and his men, disarm them and hold them as prisoners of war subject to my order." The council, too, without just cause, it appears, lost confidence in Mexia. He did not go to Bexar, as

¹Mexia to Viesca, December 3, and to Governor of Texas, December 7, 1835, archives of Texas, D, file 13, Nos. 1256 and 1252; report of information given by Julian Miracle, December 5, 1835, archives of Texas, A, file 2, No. 15 (Most of the document has been printed in the *QUARTERLY*, V 299-300); *Proceedings of the General Council*, 112, 115, 134, 141-42, 159, 166. See also Austin's draft of the declaration, Austin Papers, L 8.

requested, though most of his men—all of whom were Americans—did, and he sent with them a proclamation to the Mexicans of the garrison, some of whom he had once commanded, asking them to join the Texans. Mexia himself returned to New Orleans; Miracle is not again heard from, though reports arrived from time to time of the movements of his patron, Canales, on the Rio Grande; Gonzales, also, after the fall of San Antonio, drifted toward the Rio Grande frontier, and is several times mentioned as being at the head of two or three hundred Mexican troops south of San Patricio.¹

Thus the hope of Mexican co-operation, at best rather exotic, faded away. By the middle of January even Austin was urging the declaration of independence, which the convention made on March 2. And this, of course, quashed any sentiments of sympathy that the extremely small party of Liberals in Mexico may have felt.

7. *The Volunteer Army of the People.*

Formation and Organization.—While the consultation and the provisional government were thus trying to organize the regular army, with its divisions of infantry, artillery, and rangers, and the auxiliary force, with its 5000 volunteers, its legion of cavalry, and its army of reserve, and making overtures to the United States and to the Mexican Liberals, the “volunteer army of the people” was already facing the enemy at San Antonio de Bexar. This force was first gathered at Gonzales. At break of day, October 2, when the battle of Gonzales occurred, it numbered less than 175 men. By the 6th it had increased to 300, and resolved to march on Bexar. On the 11th Stephen F. Austin, who had been called from San Felipe, was elected commander-in-chief. He immediately appointed a staff, consisting of an adjutant and inspector general, an assistant adjutant and inspector general, and an aid-de-camp, and issued an address to the soldiers, saying that the march to Bexar would begin the next day, and emphasizing the necessity for

¹Concerning Mexia see my paper on “The Tampico Expedition,” in the *QUARTERLY*, VI 169-86. On Gonzales, see Smith to Burleson, December 9, 1835, archives of Texas, D, file 16, No. 1581; Johnson to the General Council, January 30, 1836, archives of Texas, D, file 10, No. 943; and Fannin to Robinson, February 4, 1836.

strict obedience and discipline. "It is expected," he said, "that the army of the people, altho hastily collected, will present an example of obedience that will do honor to the cause we are engaged in, and credit to the patriots who are defending it."¹

As the little band proceeded westward it slowly increased. When the start was made from Gonzales, October 12th, Austin wrote that it still did not exceed 300 men; in camp on the Cibolo, five days later, there were eight companies, with a total of 366; at the Salado (October 21) there were eleven companies with a total of 453; and Royall wrote that from twenty-five to forty men were passing San Felipe daily on their way to the front.²

On the 28th, after the sunrise battle of Fannin and Bowie (battle of Concepcion), the army advanced to mission *Concepción*, and here the main division remained until November 15, when it moved up to join the second division at the Old Mill. Austin retained the command until November 24, when he resigned to accept the appointment of commissioner to the United States. Col. Edward Burleson was elected to succeed him, and remained in more or less nominal command until the surrender of the town. On the 6th there were about 600 men in camp, on the 24th 405 pledged themselves to remain in the field until the fall of Bexar, and on December 3 William G. Cooke says that the army numbered about 700.³

¹Grayson *et al* to Austin, October 6, 1835, Austin Papers, K 26; General Order No. 1, in Austin's Order Book, Austin Papers K 64. For the numbers at Gonzales see Coleman to the citizens of San Felipe, September 30, 1835, archives of Texas, D, file 3, No. 270; Moore to same, October 6, 1835, archives of Texas, D, file 13, No. 1248; and the statement of David B. Macomb in Foote's *Texas and the Texans*, II 99.

²Austin to General Council, October 11, 1835, in *Telegraph and Texas Register*, April 11, 1837; company reports, October 17, and 21, 1835, Austin Papers, K 7; Royall to Commandant at Goliad, October 11, 1835, archives of Texas, D, file 15, No. 1459.

³On the movements of the army and the election of Burleson see Austin's Order Book, pp. 49, 59, 77, Austin Papers, K 64. On the numbers of the army, Fannin to President of Consultation, November 6, 1835, archives of Texas, D, file 6, No. 559; list of volunteers pledged to remain before Bexar, Austin Papers, K 53; and Cooke's letter in the *QUARTERLY*, IX 212. Bryan says (to Perry, Austin Papers, K 30) that there were 800 men in camp on the 7th, and Rusk (to Robinson, archives of Texas, D, file 15, No. 1466) that there were only 350 on the 25th. The first is perhaps an over-estimate and the second is undoubtedly an under-estimate.

Lack of Discipline.—But the size of the army is not a fair indication of its strength. The organization was very loose. Companies varied in size from thirteen to seventy privates, some of them officered by a captain and three lieutenants, and some commanded by a sergeant. The men were entirely undrilled and almost entirely without discipline. Time and again Austin was forced to issue orders against promiscuous shooting in and out of ranks, and when food was becoming scarce for both men and beasts the most stringent measures were needed to prevent its reckless waste. And it is significant that the commander-in-chief felt constrained to preface his orders with the apology that he had “no higher ambition than the interests of the country and the safety and honor of the army,” which he thought required that “order and discipline should be observed as far as possible.” New men were arriving daily, and others were daily leaving. “Desertions” were frequent, as many as ten occurring in one small company in a single day.¹ Officers and men alike had their own opinions of what should and should not be done, with the result that the commander-in-chief had to content himself with a policy of inaction, and was reduced to the painful position of simply trying to hold his men together, hoping for a rather hopeless something to happen and unite them on a common plan, or for Bexar to fall of its own accord. Time after time he held councils of war and submitted the question of storming the town, but the proposal was always rejected. On the 21st he gave orders to prepare for an assault at daybreak the next morning, but his two division commanders informed him that their men refused to follow them, and the order was withdrawn.² The strain upon Austin, sick, as he was when he

¹It should be understood that enrollment in a company was entirely voluntary. In general there was no regular enlistment—certainly no oath. Therefore the men considered themselves at liberty to withdraw from the army whenever they chose. They often left openly, with no effort at concealment. They were called deserters by those who remained, but were not such in the usual sense, and certainly did not consider themselves such.

²Austin himself soon came to the conclusion that his plan of storming Bexar was inadvisable, for, writing to the council, November 30 (see Foote, *Texas and the Texans*, II 161-164), he said: “The most of them [in the army] are men of families, whose loss would have made a fearful void in our thin community. They might have been precipitated upon

joined the army, was too great. On the 22nd he wrote to his brother-in-law, James F. Perry, "I have done the best I could. This army has always been composed of discordant materials, and is without proper organization. The volunteer system will not do for such a service. I have had a hard and difficult task to perform, and am *really so worn out that I begin to require rest.*" Fannin was "fully convinced that with 250 men, well chosen and properly drilled, so as to rely on each other" the place could be taken by storm, "and not much loss to the party." And Travis was no doubt reminded of his experiences at Bexar when he wrote Governor Smith that "a mob can do wonders in a sudden burst of patriotism or passion, but cannot be depended on as soldiers for a campaign." Nevertheless, Austin had only sympathy for the army. "It deserves great credit," he wrote to the council, November 18, "for its sufferings and perseverance. I have every confidence that a short time will end this campaign."¹

the fortifications at Bejar, which were defended by seven or eight hundred men, and a number of cannon, and taken the place by storm, against superior numbers; and Texas might, and in all probability would have been covered with mourning in the hour of victory. On consultation with the officers in councils of war, . . . the system was adopted of wasting away the resources, and spirits, and numbers of the enemy by a siege, the ultimate success of which appeared to be certain, without any serious hazard on our part."

¹Company reports, Austin Papers, K 7; General Orders, Order Book, pp. 53, 55, 57, 62, 68, 69, Austin Papers K 64; Minutes of Councils of War, Austin Papers, K 52, and Order Book, pp. 70-71; Austin to Perry, November 22, 1835, Austin Papers; Fannin to Houston, November 18, 1835, archives of Texas, D, file 6, No. 557; and Travis to Smith, December 3, 1835, file 18, No. 1757. For additional light on conditions at Bexar, see Johnson to Williamson, November 18, 1835 (archives of Texas, D, file 10, No. 926): "We have had considerable desertion in our lines since we arrived, which has been remedied in part by the recruits from different parts of the country who are coming almost daily. The camp is only kept together by the patriotism of the men and the unremitting exertions of the officers;" Rusk to Robinson, November 25, 1835 (archives of Texas, D, file 15, No. 1460): "We have had difficulties which none but those that have been engaged in them could well know;" James Cheshire and H. McHanks to Provisional Government, November 30, 1835, archives of Texas, D, file 3, No. 299; Mercer to Smith, December 25, 1835 (archives of Texas, D, file 13, No. 1264): "Our people met in a very disorganized manner and rather pr chance succeeded in taking San Antonio."

The Garrison at Goliad.—At the same time a rather migratory garrison in much the same state of discipline was holding the fortress of La Bahía or Goliad. The place was captured from its small garrison of Mexican soldiers by Capt. G. M. Collinsworth with a company of fifty-two men on the night of October 9. At first it was feared that General Cos would make a strong effort to retake it, and Collinsworth was rapidly reinforced, so that his command by noon of the 11th numbered 180. But this fear soon subsided and the garrison melted away to a mere handful, some of the men returning home and others going to join the army that was gathering at Gonzales for the march on Bexar. Only Austin's positive orders prevented all the men from leaving. They wanted to get into the active campaign, they said, and the conduct of Captain Dimit, who had succeeded Collinsworth, and was inclined to be something of a martinet, increased their restlessness. October 21st Dimit wrote desperately to Austin, "How shall I keep the men together? Or shall I permit them to go & come as they please?" And when Austin sought to help him by issuing another order, saying that men who left without permission would be published as deserters, Dimit declared that on some it had "no effect, or, if any, a very different one from that desired." It was considered an important post, however, securing communication between San Antonio and the Gulf, and the Texans managed to retain control of it till the advance of Urrea in the spring."¹

Relations with the Provisional Government.—Members of the consultation did not consider the "army of the people" as in any manner subject to them. Their attitude toward it was, in fact, very deferential. Resolutions were adopted, November 3, commending Austin, Fannin, and Bowie for their success in the battle of Concepcion. On the 12th General Houston offered a resolution thanking the army on general principles for "perseverance, firmness, patriotism, and courage in defending the liberties of Texas." And again, on the 13th, Collinsworth's capture of Goliad was remembered, and in order to forestall possible jealousy a resolution of thanks was voted to him and his men. The military committee

¹Ingram's report of the capture of Goliad, in *Telegraph and Texas Register*, October 24, 1836; Austin to Smith, Collinsworth, and Alley, October 12, 1835, in Austin's Order Book, Austin Papers, K 64; Dimit to Austin, October 21, and 30, 1835, Austin Papers.

defined their relations with the army in these words: "This force is composed of volunteers from every rank of citizens in the country, whose services generally commenced before the assembling of this house, and as their movements have hitherto been regulated by officers of their own choice, no obligation can be imposed upon them to submit to the control of the provisional government; advisory communications are all that can be made to them."¹

With respect, therefore, to the people's army the consultation confined itself mainly to the effort to secure reinforcements. Districts that had not contributed their quota of men were urged to do so at once, and the temptation to shirk was removed by a resolution of November 11 to the effect that persons leaving the country to avoid participation in the present struggle should forfeit all their land and property to the government.²

To this task and the equally difficult one of supplying the men already in the field the general council fell heir. An ordinance of November 19 provided for the immediate purchase of quantities of food, clothing, tents, surgical supplies, soap, candles, and cooking utensils, and axes, spades, and shovels. Medicine had already been forwarded, it was said, in sufficient quantity for the present. Mr. John W. Moore was appointed "contractor" to carry this law into effect, with authority to pledge the public faith for the payment of such debts as he might incur. The same day a proclamation was issued, calling for more volunteers, and announcing that "all the supplies . . . suited to the necessities of this inclement season have been procured and are procuring through the people's agents appointed for that purpose." This was a trifle premature, perhaps, but the council was determined to "make good," if possible. So Mr. Millard was appointed on the 22d to obtain supplies for a company on the way to the army, and on the 27th an ordinance was rushed through, creating a commissary at San Felipe to look after volunteers passing there. John B. Johnson was chosen for this responsible position, and he began his duties at once by issuing eighty rations to a company from Mobile. At the same time an appropriation of \$1500 was made for the benefit of the army at Bexar, and a few days later (November 28) John Dunn also was

¹*Journals of the Consultation*, 9, 39, 41, 50.

²*Ibid.*, 33, 34, 35.

appointed a commissary and ordered to buy for it at Matagorda or the nearest point possible a quantity of flour, bread, and beans. December 1st, having received news of the "grass fight," the council avowed itself deeply grateful to the men engaged in that "brilliant affair," and seized the occasion to assure them that no means would be omitted to aid, comfort, and assist them in their important investment of Bexar. Before the army received this gratifying assurance, however, Colonel Burleson had grown impatient and appointed William Pettus contractor for the volunteers. This appointment the council ratified on the 5th, but before Pettus had an opportunity to prove his efficiency Bexar had capitulated and most of the army dispersed.¹

The council had made little effort to reinforce the army, relying upon the work already done by the "permanent council" and the consultation and upon the general excitement aroused by the battle of Gonzales, the capture of Goliad, and the subsequent march on Bexar. A letter from Milam and Burleson, received on the 9th, and announcing the beginning of the assault on Bexar and the need of ammunition and reinforcements, created, therefore, a prodigious stir. One committee was appointed to gather up and dispatch to the army all the powder and lead in town, another to employ expresses to scour the country for volunteers and additional ammunition, and still another to procure horses for these expresses. Most of the members being thus on special duty, the council adjourned. The next day an address was issued, explaining to the people the straits of the army, and pleading for reinforcements. J. W. Fannin and Thomas J. Rusk were appointed recruiting agents,—the one to operate east and the other west of the Trinity—to enlist volunteers for thirty days. In the meantime Dimit was increasing the strain by calling for reinforcements at Goliad. But on the 15th came the news that Bexar had fallen, and the joy of the council was unconfined.²

As to the pay of the volunteers, the consultation had decreed that such as remained in the service until the fall of Bexar, or until honorably discharged, should receive \$20 a month and such dona-

¹*Proceedings of the General Council*, 24, 25, 29, 33-34, 45, 59, 69, 74, 75, 87-89; *Ordinances and Decrees*, 14, 30-31, 32-34, 37, 50, 54.

²*Proceedings of the General Council*, 33-34, 130-31, 133, 137-138, 139-40, 160-62.

tions of land as the government should vote them. For some reason, however,— perhaps to create an incentive to enlistment in the regular army or the auxiliary corps—the council did not admit these volunteers to the benefit of the bounty laws. Only those,— so reads the ordinance,—“their heirs or legal representatives, who have been or may hereafter be killed in battle, or come to death by sickness or accident in going to or returning from the volunteer army,” shall be entitled to one mile square, or 640 acres of land.¹

The Army after the Fall of Bexar.—In his message of the 19th the governor declared that it was now time, since Bexar had capitulated, for “the government to bring everything under its own control, and pursue the organic system in place of confusion and desultory warfare.” And in this, at least, the council was agreed with him. It had already tactfully suggested to the volunteers that they could now best serve the country by retiring to their homes until called out again in the spring, but on Christmas day there were still 400 men at San Antonio, 70 at Washington, 80 at Goliad, and 200 at Velasco—an aggregate of 750. The expense of maintaining so many men was great. Certainly Texas could not in her weak financial condition afford to keep them idle. To do so, moreover, the military committee thought, would be inadvisable for two reasons, in the first place, it would create the impression abroad that Texas needed no more soldiers, and in the second place, it would give the enemy time to fortify the Rio Grande frontier at Laredo and Matamoras. Partly, therefore, because it would furnish the means of keeping the troops employed; partly, perhaps, because it might further the plan of securing the co-operation of the Mexican Liberals; and partly because it seemed to offer some other advantages on its own account, the committee recommended an advance against Matamoras. The plan was adopted by the council, and on the 27th the governor was requested to have his proper officers concentrate all the troops at Copano and San Patricio in preparation for the expedition.²

¹*Journals of the consultation*, 29; *Proceedings of the General Council*, 85, 96, 146, 149; *Ordinances and Decrees*, 78. By an act of the convention, in March, all the volunteers from the United States who participated in the siege of Bexar also became entitled to 640 acres of land. See below, page 256. Also page 261, note.

²*Proceedings of the General Council*, 160-62, 185, 202-3, 217.

Into the tangle of the Matamoras expedition it is, fortunately, not necessary to enter very deeply. Governor Smith had already conceived the plan, and by his order General Houston had provisionally instructed James Bowie to undertake it on the 17th. Bowie did not go, and Houston was opposed to going himself. The council being determined, however, appointed, at his own request, F. W. Johnson to lead the expedition (January 3). He had already started 200 men to Copano under his aid, Dr. Grant, for this very purpose, and the council was surprised to receive a letter from him on the 6th, saying that he had decided not to go. Fannin was then appointed to collect volunteers and lead the expedition, and he entered upon his duties immediately. But on the 7th Johnson announced that he had changed his mind again, and would go after all, and he forthwith issued his proclamation calling for volunteers. The council, seeing that he meant business, ratified his acts on the 14th, but at the same time specifically declared that no authority was withdrawn thereby from Fannin. To make matters worse, Colonel Bowie had appeared on the 6th and "exhibited to the Council orders from the Commander-in-Chief of the army to proceed against Matamoras, and took leave of the Council for his departure." And now Governor Smith, acting under the council's resolution of December 27, ordered Houston to take charge of all the troops, and direct the expedition himself. Houston departed immediately, and found a number of men at Goliad and Refugio. He made addresses at both places, and succeeded in convincing most of the men that he alone had the right to command them. Johnson's force was thereby too much reduced for him to proceed to Matamoras, so he moved on down to San Patricio with about a hundred men, and there remained until surprised by Urrea, February 27. Houston's force was also too small, so he left the men in camp and returned to San Felipe, when Governor Smith gave him a furlough until March 1, and he went to East Texas to arrange a treaty with the Indians. Fannin's forces gathered too slowly to enable him to make the expedition, and the early part of February he went into quarters at Goliad.¹

¹*Proceedings of the General Council*, 230, 250, 265, 270, 273-74, 287, 304, 315-17. For a detailed description of the confusion of the Matamoras expedition, see the *QUARTERLY*, V 312-45, in W. Roy Smith's "The Quarrel between Governor Smith and the Council," etc. See also Houston to Smith, January 30, 1836, in Yoakum, II 460-70.

8. *The Convention and the Army.*

The Regular Army.—The situation, then, when the constituent convention assembled on March 1st, was about this: The little garrison at Bexar, left in a very destitute condition by Johnson and Grant in December, had been reinforced by Travis and Bowie to 150 men, Fannin was at Goliad with something more than 400, and a few detached companies were scattered in different places, while new arrivals from the United States were becoming more frequent. One of the first of the convention's military acts was to re-elect General Houston commander-in-chief of all the land forces—"regulars, volunteers, and militia, when in service." A committee of five had been appointed March 1 to ascertain the condition of the army in the field, the number and grades of the officers, with the size of their commands and where stationed. A report, showing the situation as we already know it, was made on the 10th. Fannin, it was pointed out, held the rank of colonel in both the regular army and the auxiliary volunteers. Tentative measures were taken to provide for the immediate necessities of the men, and the bounty of auxiliary volunteers from the United States who should remain in service until the end of the war was increased to 1280 acres of land. Those who had already served or should hereafter serve six months were entitled to 640 acres, and those who had served three months were to have 320 acres. Those, also, who had participated in the siege of San Antonio were granted 640 acres. This was in addition to what claims they might acquire under the colonization laws.¹

The Militia Bill.—But the convention had come to realize, with Travis and Fannin, that the only hope of the country now lay in a draft of the militia; consequently much time was spent in framing a bill for that purpose. The law, as reported on the 7th and passed on the 11th, declared all citizens between the ages of seventeen and fifty subject to militia duty—persons under and over those ages had the privilege of volunteering. Officers to be appointed by the convention were required to list the names of those subject to draft in each municipality, send one copy of the list to the president, another to the commander-in-chief, and post another

¹*Proceedings of the Convention at Washington*, 19, 23-24, 27, 33, 38, 57, 59, 70, 74, 77, in Gammel's *Laws of Texas*, I 823-98, *passim*.

in a prominent place in the municipality. In Nacogdoches, where there was a considerable Mexican population, the "natives" were to be organized separately. Only two-thirds of the militia could be employed at the same time, and for a term not exceeding six months. When a call should be made those to be drafted would be determined by lot, and each man mustered in was required "to prepare himself with a rifle or musket, one pound of powder, one pound lead, a shot pouch, powder horn, and knapsack, unless he will swear he is unable to do so without injury to his family." Persons drafted and refusing to serve were to be arrested, tried by courtmartial, and punished in accordance with the laws of the United States concerning deserters in time of war. Officers were appointed to prepare the lists in some municipalities, and on the 15th the president was requested to call out one-third of the militia, but before this could be done the enemy was upon them, and the government was bound to seek safety in a wild flight to Harrisburg. All thought of an orderly levy was then abandoned, and the citizens, left to their own inclinations, rushed to support Houston on the Colorado or joined the fugitives to the East and swelled the panic of the "runaway scrape."¹

9. *The Army of the Campaign of 1836.*

Distribution of the Forces at the Opening of the Campaign.—At the beginning of the campaign of 1836 there was a little band of regulars and volunteers under Travis and Bowie in the Alamo, about a hundred men under Johnson and Grant, with headquarters at San Patricio,² and Fannin's division of a little more than four

¹*Ibid.*, 29, 68-69, 79.

²It is hard to determine just what was the status of Johnson's command. Some of his men—they were nearly all from the United States—had undoubtedly enlisted regularly as volunteers before going to Bexar (See *Proceedings of the General Council*, 74). After the surrender of Bexar they claimed that they had volunteered with the express stipulation that they were not to be commanded by an officer of the regular army nor subject to regular discipline (see above, page 237). The military committee of the general council, considering the matter, January 14, reported that while they could not advise a departure from the laws adopted by the Government regulating the volunteer service," yet they thought the question was "quite immaterial in effect." The auxiliary

hundred at Goliad. The fate of the first two has been noted, and of the last it is only necessary to say, in brief, that Fannin began, on March 19 his retreat from Goliad, surrendered to Urrea on the 20th, and was murdered with most of his men on the 27th.¹ It now remains to trace the story of the citizen army that won the battle of San Jacinto.

The San Jacinto Army.—Drawn by the repeated calls of Travis for aid, a handful of citizens began early in March to gather at Gonzales. On the 8th there were 275 of them, and when General Houston, who had left the convention on the 6th, took command on the 11th, there were 374. But many were without arms, and others were without ammunition. The force, increased to more than 400, was formed into a regiment on the 13th. Edward Burleson was elected colonel, Sidney Sherman lieutenant colonel, and Alexander Somervell major. At midnight of the 13th, after having the news of Travis's defeat confirmed, the army began a retreat to the Colorado. There were some twenty desertions immediately—so Houston reported,—the men probably going to look after their families. As the army marched it received numerous reinforcements, some in companies and others arriving singly. Many of the latter left again, which, as one of the veterans of the campaign wrote, "they could do with impunity, as they were careful not to attach themselves to any organized company." By the 26th the number of Texans had increased to between 1200 and 1400, but when in the afternoon of that day the retreat was resumed from the Colorado to the Brazos many withdrew from the ranks—presumably to care for their families. On the 31st General Hous-

volunteers were subject to the governor and general council, and so were Johnson's volunteers, therefore your committee "advise that Colonel Johnson have the approbation of this Government to conduct the volunteers" under his command "as the officer of the Government" (*Proceedings of the General Council*, 316). It appears, then, that this was an independent force subject only to Johnson and the government. When Houston was elected by the convention (March 5) to command all the forces to be called into service it had perished.

The most satisfactory account of Fannin's movements and plans from February 7 to the massacre is to be found in Foote's *Texas and the Texans*, II 201-18, 224-60, where many of Fannin's letters are printed. Read also the letters of John Sowers Brooks, in the *QUARTERLY*, IX 169-195.

ton again halted, at Groce's on the Brazos, where the army remained until April 13, and was strengthened by fresh arrivals. Here a second regiment was formed, of which Sherman was elected colonel. An effort was also made to drill the men, but with little result. On the 13th Santa Anna crossed the Brazos and dashed on Harrisburg. On the same day Houston crossed the river, and began on the 14th his march for the same place. He reached the smoking ruins of the town on the 18th, left there his baggage train and from 225 to 275 men, most of them sick and inefficient, and pressed on. He encountered Santa Anna's advance guard at Lynch's Ferry on the San Jacinto River, April 20. The next day was won the battle of San Jacinto. Houston reported his strength in this battle at 783 men; Santa Anna's can not have exceeded 1300.¹ During the battle General Houston was wounded, and soon afterward had to go to New Orleans for treatment. His place in the army was taken by Thomas J. Rusk, the recently elected secretary of war *ad interim*. The citizen soldiers in general soon dispersed and began the planting of corn, but the army was rapidly filled up by new volunteers from the United States. Within two months after the battle of San Jacinto it was nearly 2500 strong, and was becoming rather hard to manage, but into this story it is not necessary to go.

10. *Summary and Conclusion.*

When the revolution began Texas was unprepared. This was nowhere more evident than in the military department. As soon as the consultation could meet steps were taken to organize the militia and to raise a regular army. A general plan was adopted and passed on to the provisional government, which succeeded the consultation, to carry into effect. The effort to organize the militia failed. The effort to enlist the regular army also practically failed. The provisional government planned to augment the regular army with (1) 5000 auxiliary volunteers, (2) a legion of cavalry, and (3) Chambers's army of reserve. It was found that few were willing to enlist in the first corps—though ultimately it probably num-

¹For a detailed study of the San Jacinto campaign see my article in the *QUARTERLY*, IV 238-60, with the documents which follow, pp. 260-346. Read also Houston's letters in *Yoakum*, II 470-502.

bered as many as 500,—the cavalry could not be organized, and Chambers's soldiers nearly all reached Texas too late to be of important assistance. Great dependence was placed throughout upon help from the United States, and, in fact, great aid was received in both men and money from that source. A tentative advance was made to the Liberals of Mexico, but mutual lack of confidence and the early declaration of Texan independence prevented co-operation. While the provisional government was taking these measures, the volunteer army of the people was besieging Bexar. The organization of the volunteers was loose, and they practically refused to submit to discipline, but in the capture of Bexar they accomplished their object. Most of the citizen volunteers then went home, and those who remained in the field, along with several companies from the United States, became so disorganized by the confusion arising from the contemplated Matamoras expedition that they fell an easy prey to the enemy when he advanced the next spring. The advance of the enemy also prevented the constituent convention from effectively taking hold of the military situation, so that General Houston and another citizen army became the country's sole hope for defense, but, as the event proved, they were sufficient.

This, truly, is one side of the picture. The Texas Revolution was not a spontaneous outburst of patriotic indignation against Mexican oppression. Few of the colonists, perhaps, were satisfied with all features of Mexican rule; but few, also, were those who were ready to go the length of armed rebellion. A small party of radicals and the Latin distrust of the Saxon forced the war. It came suddenly, and was soon over—lasting less than seven months. The pacific majority were dazed by its sudden development, and before some of them recovered it was past. For some of them, too, there were other enemies besides the Mexicans. Fear of the Indians they had always, and on the plantations of the Brazos there was added the threat of a slave uprising. With their families in danger, men heard only faintly the calls of the stricken country. Some, too, who would have joined the army were prevented by the wrangle between the Governor and the council, which paralyzed the government. But, when all is said, it really was the "old settlers" who did, almost unaided, all the effective fighting of the Texas Revolution. They captured Goliad and

Lipantitlán in the fall of 1835; assisted by a few companies from the United States they captured Bexar in December; and practically alone they won the battle of San Jacinto.

NOTE.—By an act of the Fifth Congress, December 30, 1840, it was provided that all soldiers who entered San Antonio between the 5th and 10th of December, 1835, and actually assisted in the capture of the place, should be entitled to 320 acres of land, "the same as though they had served out their time of three months." The preamble assigns as a reason for this law, that all but a very few claimants had received their lands by authority of previous secretaries of war, and it was not considered just that these few should be deprived of their claims.—Gammel, *Laws of Texas*, II 478.